

ABSTRACT

The present invention relates in general to an electronic advertising system. More specifically, the present invention provides a computer based direct connect system that is significantly more convenient and safer for the advertiser. In the present invention, when a person places a personal ad on the system, either via a telephone or via the Internet, the person inputs a telephone number that is stored in a database. Respondents can then direct connect and initiate a voice conversation by having the system call the advertiser's telephone number, whether the respondent's call initiates from a traditional telephone or from an Internet telephone. In addition, if the advertiser is on-line, respondents can direct connect and initiate a voice conversation with an advertiser, whether the respondent's call initiates from a traditional telephone or from an Internet telephone. If both the respondent and advertiser are on-line and both have a video capture device and camera, they can also have a video conference. These features greatly enhance the communications between the advertiser and the respondent while maintaining anonymity and heightening personal security.

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